



# NCARNG

# Weekly Safety Newsletter



February 6, 2015

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For more Safety  
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## Winter Weather Safety

Whether winter brings severe storms, light dustings or just cold temperatures creating a variety of hazards that can significantly impact everyday tasks and activities. These hazards include slippery surfaces, strong winds and environmental cold. Below are a few safety concerns and helpful tips to stay safe when the winter weather hits

### **WALKING SAFELY ON SNOW AND ICE**

To prevent slips, trips, and falls, clear walking surfaces of snow and ice, and spread deicer, as quickly as possible after a winter storm. Wear proper footwear when walking on snow or ice. A pair of insulated and water resistant boots with good rubber treads is a must for walking during or after a winter storm. Take short steps and walk at a slower pace so you can react quickly to a change in traction, when walking on an icy or snow-covered walkway.

### **STRANDED IN A VEHICLE**

If you are stranded in a vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Call for emergency assistance if needed, response time may be slow in severe winter weather conditions. Do not leave the vehicle to search for assistance unless help is visible within 100 yards. You may become disoriented and get lost in blowing and drifting snow. Display a trouble sign by hanging a brightly colored cloth on the vehicle's radio antenna and raising the hood. Turn on the vehicle's engine for about 10 minutes each hour and run the heat to keep warm. Also, turn on the vehicle's dome light when the vehicle is running as an additional signal. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow, and open a downwind window slightly for ventilation.

### **ICE STORM SAFETY**

Often in North Carolina, winter storms bring large amounts of ice accumulation. Even a thin coating of ice can result in a travel nightmare, while heavier amounts will severely damage trees and power lines. Strong winds can add extra force to already weighed down tree branches and power lines, increasing the likelihood of significant damage. Follow the steps below to stay safe in an ice storm.

- Avoid driving on icy roads.
- Be sure to charge cell phones and laptops ahead of time. Make sure you have several ways to communicate with others. Consider landline phones, social media, and texting.
- Never play around ice-covered trees; you may be injured if a branch breaks under the weight of the ice and falls. Stay clear of any downed power lines.
- Think about safe alternate power sources you could use if you lose heat, such as a fireplace, wood/coal stove or portable space heaters. However, be sure to exercise caution and follow manufacturer's instructions when using portable space heaters and other devices.
- Never use portable generators, camp stoves and grills inside your home or garage; they should only be used outside. Keep them at least 20 feet away from your home's windows, doors and vents to prevent deadly carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Use flashlights during power outages instead of candles to prevent the risk of fire, and keep plenty of extra batteries on-hand.

\*\*For more Winter Weather Safety Tips visit [www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter\\_weather/index.html](http://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_weather/index.html) and [www.weather.com/safety/winter/ice-storm-damage-impacts-20121123](http://www.weather.com/safety/winter/ice-storm-damage-impacts-20121123)





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## Avoid Frostbite & Hypothermia



Two big concerns of working or simply spending time outdoors in cold weather are frostbite and hypothermia. Both can occur at much higher temperatures than many people realize.

### HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia a drop in body temperature to 95 degrees or less can be fatal if not detected promptly and treated properly. When the body temperature drops, the blood vessels near the surface of the body narrow to reduce heat loss. Muscles begin to tighten to make heat. If the body temperature continues to drop, the person will begin to shiver. The shivering continues until the temperature drops to about 90 degrees. Temperatures below 90 degrees create a life-threatening situation.

Signs of hypothermia include forgetfulness, drowsiness, slurred speech, change in appearance (e.g., puffy face), weak pulse, slow heartbeat, and very slow and shallow breathing. If the body temperature drops to or below 86 degrees, a person may slip into a coma or have a death-like appearance.

If you notice these symptoms in a person, take his or her temperature. If it is 95 degrees or below, call a doctor or take the victim directly to a hospital. To prevent further heat loss, wrap the patient in a warm blanket. A hot water bottle or electric heating pad can be applied to the person's stomach. If the victim is alert, give small quantities of warm food or drink.

There are several things you should not do to a hypothermia victim. Do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not give a hot shower or bath, since it could cause shock. Generally, do not try to treat hypothermia at home. The condition should be treated in a hospital.

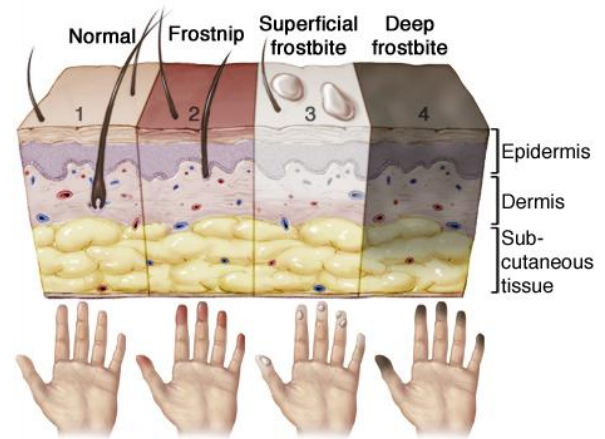
### FROSTBITE

The parts of the body most affected by frostbite are exposed areas of the face (cheeks, nose, chin, forehead), the ears, wrists, hands and feet.

Frostbitten skin is whitish and stiff and feels numb rather than painful. When spending time outdoors during cold weather, be alert for signs of frostbite and, if you notice any, take immediate action.

To treat frostbite, warm the affected part of the body gradually. Wrap the area in blankets, sweaters, coats, etc. If no warm wrappings are available, place frostbitten hands under the armpits or use your body to cover the affected area. Seek medical attention immediately.

Do not rub frostbitten areas; the friction can damage the tissue. Do not apply snow to frostbitten areas. Because its temperature is below freezing, snow will aggravate the condition.



### WHAT TO WEAR TO PREVENT HYPOTHERMIA AND FROSTBITE

Dress in layers of light-weight clothing which keep you warmer than a single layer of heavy clothes. Remove layers as necessary to prevent overheating and perspiring which can lead to chills or hypothermia later. Remember that wet clothing is 20 times less warm than dry clothing. Wear a hat and you'll stay much warmer when working in cold conditions. As much as half your body heat can go up in steam off the top of a bare head. Protect your ears from frostbite as well by wearing a hat that will cover your ears, or use ear muffs. Wear the right gloves for the work you are doing. Gloves should have enough insulation to keep you warm and prevent frostbite, but be thin enough so you can feel what you are doing.

\*\*For more Winter Health information visit

<http://www.safetytoolboxtalks.com/Seasonal/winter-health-and-safety-tips.html>

